28!

detention. I was able to observe him well; I was seated on the lawyers' bench, right beside him; without having to get up, just by leaning over the railing, I could even see his thin, bare calves; he was completely covered by a blue-black cape, threadbare and worn to a fringe, caught in a hook at the collar. The old father is called to the stand. I learned from the questioning that the boy is only twelve; three older <tf com-rades" were being judged with him; the lad had let himself be led by them into an easy robbery; by means of a broken window, without even going into a garden house, they had managed to carry off various carpenter's tools.

"There wasn't even fifteen francs* worth,*' said the eldest.

The old father would like to get his child back; he was satisfied with him until this day, he says. . . . When the judge finally reads: "Transferred to the care of . , , (?) until his majority,'* the boy, being led off by the policemen, sobs.

Finished my novel the night before last—with too great ease, and this makes me fear that I did not put into the last pages all that I was *charged to* put in.[32]

It is now high time to break with certain habits, certain indulgences in writing. I wish to try at once. And since this notebook happens to be filled, begin another one in which I shall get in training, in which I shall cultivate *new relations.* Keep from living on one's impetus.

Edmond Jaloux came to dinner last night. I suffered to feel so far from him, for I have a very old (though somewhat hardened) affection for him. From contact with society, he is taking on ever more polish; he talks with great tact and sweetness. He had come in evening dress> obliged, upon leaving the Villa, to attend a supper, at

which he could get over the boredom I caused him; for I had nothing but gloomy things to say to him; the sight of his tail-coat froze me up, together with the thought that this is his real costume, in which he is more comfortable than in an ordinary coat.

There were not very many to notice that 11bad never written anything more perfect than *Amyntas.* People looked for descriptions, for the picturesque, for information about the country and its customs. There is hardly anything ia the book that I could not just as well have written elsewhere, in France, or anywhere whatever* To whom could the secret value of the book speak? Only to a few rare souls; the otters were disappointed.

[32] The word *du&gS* also means *loadecT both in the sense of a creature or vehicle and in the sense of a firearm.